

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims replaces all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. (Previously Presented) A tissue anchor insertion tool comprising:
a first member defining a region configured to receive a tissue anchor;
a second member positioned to substantially cover the tissue anchor during introduction to a surgical site;
an applicator configured to engage the tissue anchor; and
a flexor configured to engage the applicator to deflect the applicator to deploy the anchor;
and
wherein the applicator and flexor are configured such that the applicator and flexor undergo relative axial motion when the applicator is deflected by the flexor.
2. (Previously Presented) The tissue anchor insertion tool of claim 1 wherein the first member includes the applicator, and the second member includes the flexor.
3. (Previously Presented) The tissue anchor insertion tool of claim 1 wherein the applicator includes a straight portion and a ramped portion.
4. (Previously Presented) The tissue anchor insertion tool of claim 1 wherein the applicator includes a first end portion fixed to the first member, and a second end portion extending into the region to engage the tissue anchor.

5. (Previously Presented) The tissue anchor insertion tool of claim 1 wherein the applicator comprises a spring.

6. (Previously Presented) The tissue anchor insertion tool of claim 1 wherein the applicator is configured to deflect laterally to a direction of relative motion between the members.

7. (Previously Presented) The tissue anchor insertion tool of claim 1 wherein the flexor comprises a pin coupled to the second member for movement therewith relative to the applicator.

8. (Original) The tissue anchor of claim 7 wherein the first member defines an opening for receiving the pin.

9. (Original) The tissue anchor insertion tool of claim 1 wherein the first member includes first and second distal prongs defining the region therebetween.

10. (Original) The tissue anchor insertion tool of claim 9 wherein the prongs each define arcuate surfaces for receiving the tissue anchor.

11. (Original) The tissue anchor insertion tool of claim 1 wherein the second member comprises a tubular element substantially surrounding the first member.

12. (Original) The tissue anchor insertion tool of claim 1 further comprising a contact extending between the first and second members, actuation of the contact causing relative motion between the first member and the second member.

13. (Original) The tissue anchor insertion tool of claim 12 wherein the contact is fixed to the second member.

14. (Original) The tissue anchor insertion tool of claim 13 wherein the first member defines a slot for receiving at least a portion of the contact.

15. (Original) The tissue anchor insertion tool of claim 1 further comprising a handle.

16. (Previously Presented) The tissue anchor insertion tool of claim 15 further comprising a coupling between the handle and the first member preventing relative rotation therebetween.

17-18. (Cancelled).

19. (Previously Presented) A tissue anchor insertion tool comprising:
a first member including an applicator and defining a region configured to receive a tissue anchor, the applicator configured to move laterally to deploy the tissue anchor from the region;

a second member including a flexor and positioned to substantially cover the tissue anchor during introduction to a surgical site, the members being coupled by engagement of the flexor and the applicator such that relative motion between the members causes the flexor to deflect the applicator laterally to deploy the tissue anchor from the region.

20. (Previously Presented) An anchor and tool assembly, comprising:
a tissue anchor; and
a tool comprising:
a first member receiving the tissue anchor;
a second member positioned to substantially cover the tissue anchor during introduction to a surgical site;
an applicator configured to engage the tissue anchor; and
a flexor configured to engage the applicator to deflect the applicator to deploy the anchor.

21. (Previously Presented) A tissue anchor insertion tool comprising:

a member defining a region configured to receive a tissue anchor to deliver the tissue anchor to an insertion site, the member including an applicator configured to deflect laterally to deploy the anchor from the region; and

a movable element coupled to the member for movement relative to the member between an extended position and a retracted position, the movable element substantially covering the tissue anchor when in the extended position, and substantially uncovering the tissue anchor when in the retracted position, the movable element including a flexor configured to move with the movable member to deflect the applicator.

22. (Cancelled).

23. (Previously Presented) The tissue anchor insertion tool of claim 21 wherein the flexor is configured to deflect the applicator upon axial movement of the movable element.

24. (Original) The tissue anchor insertion tool of claim 23 wherein the applicator includes a straight portion permitting movement of the flexor relative to the applicator without lateral movement of the applicator.

25. (Previously Presented) The tissue anchor insertion tool of claim 21 wherein the applicator includes a ramped portion, wherein movement of the flexor along the ramped portion laterally deflects the applicator.

26. (Previously Presented) A method comprising:

providing an insertion tool including first and second members coupled for relative motion, the tool including a flexor and an applicator;

inserting a tissue anchor into tissue using the insertion tool, the tissue anchor being mounted to the first member and substantially covered by the second member during insertion into tissue; and

relatively moving the first and second members such that the flexor engages the applicator to deflect the applicator to deploy the tissue anchor from the first member.

27. (Original) The method of claim 26 wherein the step of relatively moving comprises proximally moving the second member relative to the first member.

28. (Original) The method of claim 26 wherein the step of relatively moving uncovers the tissue anchor.

29. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 26 wherein the step of relatively moving deploys the tissue anchor by deflecting the applicator laterally to engage the tissue anchor.

30. (Original) The method of claim 29 wherein engaging the tissue anchor rotates the tissue anchor.

31. (Currently Amended) An arthroscopic method comprising:
inserting a tissue anchor into tissue; and
engaging an applicator with a ~~member~~flexor to deflect the applicator such that the applicator rotates the tissue anchor during deployment of the tissue anchor into tissue.

32. (Original) The method of claim 31 further comprising substantially covering the tissue anchor during insertion of the tissue anchor into tissue.

33. (Previously Presented) The tissue anchor insertion tool of claim 1 wherein the first and second members are configured such that relative motion between the members causes the flexor to deflect the applicator.

34. (Previously Presented) The tissue anchor insertion tool of claim 1 wherein the applicator is configured to engage and rotate the anchor upon deflection.

35. (Previously Presented) The tissue anchor insertion tool of claim 34 wherein the anchor is configured to rotate about an axis that is substantially perpendicular to an axis that is longitudinal to the second member.

36. (Cancelled).

37. (Previously Presented) The tissue anchor insertion tool of claim 1 wherein the first and second members are coupled by engagement of the flexor and the applicator.

38. (Cancelled).